



Artificial Intelligence Policy

POLICY / DOCUMENT PURPOSE STATEMENT

Fircroft College recognises that Artificial Intelligence (AI) technologies offer significant opportunities to enhance teaching, learning, administration, business processes, learner support, and staff productivity.

This policy establishes clear principles and expectations for the safe, ethical, legal, and effective use of AI by staff, learners, governors, contractors, volunteers, and other stakeholders.

APPLICATION

This policy applies to all college staff, learners, governors and any person accessing college systems, networks, devices or data.

INTERPRETATION

Further guidance on the use or interpretation of this policy may be obtained from the Information Systems & IT Manager.

LINKS WITH OTHER POLICIES / DOCUMENTS

IT Security Policy
Data Protection Policy
Freedom of Expression Policy
Fircroft Plagiarism Policy
Data Retention Policy
Safeguarding Policy
Prevent Policy
Student Disciplinary Policy
Student Charter
Staff Disciplinary Policy & Procedure

Version number	1
Owner / Area	Information Systems & IT Manager
Date of implementation	08/26
Review date	07/27
Ratified / Authorised by	

1. Purpose

Fircroft College recognises that Artificial Intelligence (AI) technologies offer significant opportunities to enhance teaching, learning, administration, business processes, learner support, and staff productivity.

This policy establishes clear principles and expectations for the safe, sustainable, ethical, legal, and effective use of AI by staff, learners, governors, contractors, volunteers, and other stakeholders.

The College is committed to:

- Accountability: Humans, not technology, remain responsible for work outcomes; all AI-generated content must be fact-checked and validated by a human
- Support the responsible development and use of AI by balancing innovation and operational need with the College's environmental sustainability values, seeking to minimise and offset environmental impacts where appropriate.
- Harnessing AI to improve educational outcomes and operational effectiveness.
- Protecting learners, staff, and organisational data.
- Maintaining academic integrity and professional standards. Being open about where and how AI is used in teaching, learning, and operations
- Ensuring compliance with relevant legislation and regulatory requirements.
- Promoting digital inclusion, critical thinking and curiosity, and responsible use of technology.

2. Scope

The policy applies to all forms of Artificial Intelligence, including but not limited to:

- Generative AI (e.g. ChatGPT, Microsoft Copilot, Gemini, Claude).
- AI-powered writing and content creation tools.
- Image, video, and audio generation tools.
- AI-powered analytics and decision-support systems.
- AI-enhanced productivity software.
- Automated chatbots and virtual assistants.

3. Guiding Principles

The College will use AI according to the following principles:

- Our use of AI must reflect our values.
- Approach with curiosity and openness to the possibilities AI enables.
- Believe in people and the role of humans within AI processes to ensure values driven usage.
- Be prepared for changes – as we respond to the ever-changing external AI landscape, learn more, build more confidence, adopt in practice what we learn.
- Be open and transparent about use – responsibility for our work and outcomes of it always sits with people not tech.
- Assume a degree of fallibility, fact check and cross reference all output responses.

- Support efficient use so as to minimise environmental impacts and drive operational efficacy.
- Empowerment and learning – Create a culture of confident users in responsible AI, to improve the way we work and learn.
- The college encourages responsible innovation. We encourage creativity and experimentation with AI within clear boundaries. This means testing ideas thoughtfully, protecting data, and keeping people firmly in control of decisions.

4. Operational Use of AI

The College supports responsible use of AI to improve operational effectiveness. AI can be a powerful tool to drive efficiency and automation whilst reducing manual handling. However, this should be tempered with a risk-based approach.

Permitted operational uses may include:

- Drafting routine correspondence.
- Producing draft versions of reports and policies.
- Creating meeting summaries and action plans.
- Generating training materials.
- Supporting marketing content creation.
- Research and data analysis.
- Administrative workflow automation.
- Presentation creation.
- Project planning and process improvement.

All AI use should follow the colleges wider IT Security Policy.

5. Data Protection and Information Governance

The college's approved Generative AI tool is Microsoft Copilot, accessed via a college account. Information accessed and shared within this environment is protected within the colleges wider Microsoft Office 365 tenant environment.

Staff must not enter the following into other public AI Generative systems:

- Personal data.
- Sensitive personal data.
- Learner records.
- Staff records.
- Confidential business information.
- Commercially sensitive information.
- Financial information.
- Safeguarding records.
- Information covered by contractual restrictions.

The College reserves the right to restrict or prohibit AI tools that present unacceptable risk.

6. Academic Use of AI

6.1 Principles

The College recognises that AI is becoming a normal feature of study and employment.

Learners should develop the skills to use AI responsibly, ethically, and critically.

AI should support learning, not replace it.

6.2 Acceptable Learner Use

Where permitted by tutors, learners may use AI for:

- Brainstorming ideas.
- Research planning.
- Study support.
- Clarification of concepts.
- Feedback on drafts.
- Language support.
- Revision activities.
- Skills development.

Students are encouraged to use AI tools as aids to supplement their understanding rather than relying on AI generated content. Learners remain responsible for the accuracy and originality of submitted work. For further guidance on the safe use of AI, please speak to a member of the colleges IT team.

The college will develop learners digital understanding especially in relation to online safety, including understanding the implications of sharing personal data and intellectual property online. Learners will learn to protect their privacy and respect the intellectual property rights of others in digital environments. These skills will empower learners to become active digital citizens.

6.3 Prohibited Learner Use

Unless specifically authorised, learners must not:

- Submit AI-generated work as their own.
- Use AI to complete assessments intended to measure individual or group knowledge or skills.
- Generate references, evidence, or research that has not been verified.
- Create fake academic sources.
- Use AI to bypass learning activities.
- Misrepresent AI-generated content as original authorship.

Such actions may be treated as academic misconduct and will be reviewed in line with the college's plagiarism policy and student disciplinary policy. For further information please see appendix B.

6.4 Assessment

Learners are prohibited to use AI in the completion of assessment briefs.

Curriculum staff must ensure assessment design remains robust in an AI-enabled environment. Ensuring External Quality Assurance (EQA) and Internal Quality Assurance (QA) compliancy is maintained.

6.5 Declaration of AI Use

Where required by the assessment brief, learners should include a statement such as:

"I used an AI tool to support idea generation and drafting. All content submitted has been reviewed, verified, and edited by me and represents my own understanding."

The college will defer to the relevant awarding body in relation to the wording of its declaration.

7. Staff Use of AI in Teaching and Learning

Academic staff may use AI to:

- Develop lesson plans.
- Create learning resources.
- Produce assessment ideas.
- Generate discussion activities.
- Support differentiation and accessibility.
- Create formative feedback.

However, staff must:

- Check all outputs for accuracy.
- Ensure content is educationally appropriate.
- Avoid over-reliance on AI.
- Maintain professional judgement.

Final decisions relating to teaching, assessment, progression, and learner outcomes must always be made by College staff.

8. Safeguarding and Wellbeing

AI must never replace professional safeguarding processes. Assessing potential harm and risk should always remain the responsibility of an appropriately trained person. The college will not use AI Generative tools in any of its safeguarding processes or activities.

The college will not:

- Use AI to make safeguarding decisions.
- Rely solely on AI when assessing risk.
- Use AI-generated counselling or wellbeing advice without professional oversight.

Safeguarding concerns must always be reported and managed through established College procedures.

Concerns and anxieties about AI use, whether related to job roles, data use or the pace of change, should not be dismissed. The rapid emergence of AI tools can create uncertainty, stress or a sense of being left behind, particularly for learners and colleagues who feel less confident with new technologies or who have limited opportunities to experiment safely. Users may also experience implicit or explicit pressure to “keep up” with AI enabled ways of working, which can affect morale and psychological safety. Fears that AI could replace aspects of roles, undermine expertise or shift expectations without clarity or support can contribute to reduced wellbeing, disengagement or reluctance to participate in organisational innovation.

These concerns are not limited to College learners or staff use of AI. User may also feel significant worry about the broader societal and environmental impacts of AI, and about how AI may affect the education sector, communities and future generations. Because Fircroft is deeply values driven and motivated by a commitment to environmental and social justice, the risks posed by AI, including ethical risks, equity implications and sustainability impacts, may generate emotional strain. The college will cultivate a safe space for users to acknowledge these wider concerns. Ensuring AI’s accelerating influence may not unintentionally heighten stress, reduce trust or create feelings of exclusion or conflict within teams.

In order to support emerging users of AI, this policy also includes a helpful AI term guidance included in Appendix A.

9. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

AI may produce content that is discriminatory, exclusionary, or misaligned with British values. There are also risks that AI tools may create or exacerbate inequities - for example; biased online content may be used inappropriately to disadvantage or discriminate against an individual or group.

Those with digital exclusion or barriers may also be disadvantaged. The college will work with all users to ensure equitable access of training and hardware to reduce these barriers.

10. Copyright and Intellectual Property

Learners must respect:

- Copyright legislation.
- Licensing agreements.
- Intellectual property rights.

AI-generated content should not be assumed to be free from copyright restrictions. Copyright usage should be sorted before materials are copied, referenced or published in any way.

Users are responsible for ensuring materials used or published comply with applicable laws and licences.

11. Monitoring and Compliance

The college will gather feedback from learners, staff and other users, and engage in ongoing research to refine our use of generative AI, address concerns, and adapt to evolving educational needs. The College will actively seek feedback from underrepresented groups to ensure that the implementation of AI technologies meets the needs of all members of the college community. For example:

Learners	Staff	Other Users
End of course feedback	Staff surveys	College website and social media
Learner ILPs and tutorials	CPD sessions	Partnership briefings and information events
Student union and enrichment activities	All staff meetings	
Student surveys	Annual reviews	

Breaches may result in:

Staff

- The college taking management action which may proceed or lead to disciplinary action.
- Dependant on risk, potential withdrawal of system access.

Learners

- Student disciplinary action.
- Restrictions on system access.

12. Roles and Responsibilities

Governing Body

- Provides strategic oversight of the ethical use of AI across the college and by both staff and learners.
- Monitors emerging significant AI risks via MT updates and reports as well as external updates.

Principal and Senior Leadership Team

- Ensure effective governance of AI use.
- Promote responsible adoption across the college.

Managers

- Ensure staff understand and comply with the policy.
- Assess operational risks associated with AI use.

Staff

- Use AI responsibly.

- Maintain confidentiality and data security.
- Verify outputs before use.
- Monitor safe and ethical AI use for learners ensuring all learners are aware of their responsibility in the ethical use of AI and that all learners review and sign the AI usage declaration statement.

Learners

- Use AI honestly and ethically.
- Comply with assessment requirements.

IT and Data Protection Leads

- Assess security, privacy, and compliance risks.
- Support safe deployment of AI technologies.
- Lead college guidance and acceptable use practices

13. Training and Awareness

The College will provide appropriate guidance and training to ensure accessibility, engagement and further skills development is enabled. Topics of learning may include:

- Safe AI use.
- Academic integrity.
- Data protection.
- Prompt engineering.
- Verification of AI outputs.
- Bias and ethical considerations.
- Copyright guidelines

Staff and learners are expected to engage with relevant training opportunities.

14. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner if required by:

- Legislative changes.
- Regulatory updates.
- Sector guidance.
- Significant technological developments.
- Emerging risks associated with AI.

This policy will be reviewed by the document owner, cross checked by the colleges Assistant Principal – Business Support & Development before proceeding to Operations Committee for review and approval.

Appendix A

Helpful AI Terms

The definitions below are not exhaustive but are intended to provide enough clarity to follow the rest of this document.

a. **Artificial intelligence (AI)**

AI refers to computer systems designed to perform tasks that would typically require human intelligence. This includes recognising patterns, making predictions, optimising processes and generating content.

AI is already embedded in many systems and software, with some uses being more visible than others. Examples include spam filters, and adaptive learning platforms that tailor content to individual students. We sometimes refer to these as "quiet AI" - tools that work in the background, making decisions or recommendations without requiring direct user interaction.

b. **Generative AI (GenAI)**

Generative AI is a subset of AI that creates new content, such as text, images, audio, video or code, based on patterns learned from large datasets. Popular tools like ChatGPT, Claude, Copilot and Mid journey fall into this category.

This is the technology driving much of the current attention and anxiety around AI in education and broader society. It is also the type of AI that raises the most immediate questions around academic integrity, intellectual property, bias and environmental impact.

c. **Large language models (LLMs)**

Most widely used generative AI text tools are powered by large language models. These are systems trained on vast quantities of text data to predict and generate human-like language. "Large" refers both to the size of the training data and the number of parameters (the internal variables the model uses to make predictions).

Larger models are generally more capable, but they also require significantly more computational resources to train and run, which translates directly into higher energy consumption and, in most cases, increased greenhouse gas emissions and water use.

d. **Small language models (SLMs)**

Not all tasks require the most powerful models. Smaller language models are trained on less data and have use fewer variable parameters to undertake tasks. They are less resource-intensive to run and can be still perform sufficient for many routine functions effectively, tasks, such as summarising text, answering straightforward questions or drafting simple communications.

e. **Prompts**

A prompt is the input a user provides to a generative AI system, typically a question, instruction or piece of text. The quality and clarity of the prompt affects the usefulness of the output.

f. **Inference**

Inference is the process of a trained AI model generating an output in response to a prompt. Every time you use ChatGPT, ask Copilot to draft an email, or generate an image using AI, you are triggering an inference.

g. **Agentic AI**

AI systems that can act autonomously to achieve goals; making decisions and taking actions without constant human direction. Rather than simply responding to prompts, agentic AI can plan sequences of steps, use multiple tools, and adapt its approach based on results. Examples include AI assistants that can book travel by checking availability across multiple websites, or research tools that can gather information from various sources and synthesize findings.

h. AI-native tools/features

AI-native refers to tools and applications designed from the ground up with AI as a core component, rather than having AI features added to existing software. Examples include ChatGPT and Claude (built specifically as conversational AI tools) versus AI features added to Microsoft Word or Adobe Photoshop.

Appendix B

Below is the process to be followed for suspected AI misuse

